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SUBJECT Second Interview With Ralph *McGeehy*

ALAN MAITLAND: Eugene Hasenfus will be put on trial in Managua, the Foreign Minister said today.

The American was shot down over Nicaragua while on a mission to supply the Contra rebels with weapons.

Yesterday, at a press conference in Managua, Hasenfus said he flew numerous missions out of El Salvador and Honduras for a CIA-linked airline and worked closely with CIA operatives.

In Washington, the CIA and Secretary of State George Shultz deny his story.

Ralph McGeehy is the author of Deadly Deceits, My 25 Years with the CIA.

DENNIS TRUDEAU: Mr. McGeehy, this man, Hansenfus, in Nicaragua didn't take much time before he confessed. Are you surprised that both [sic] the fact that he confessed and what he said about working for CIA employees or with CIA employees?

RALPH MCGEEHY: I'm not surprised at all that he, you know, claimed that he worked with CIA employees. That's been the assumption all along that the Agency's been operating even around the constraints put on it by Congress. So, that's absolutely no surprise at all.

What is a little surprising to me is the fact that he's saying these things and saying them so quickly. Of course, I imagine he's in a state of shock, trauma and that sort of thing, but he is making these claims and

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even naming individuals, which I think will not stand him in good stead when and if he gets back home.

TRUDEAU: What do you mean by that? I mean, what's one thing to confess and another thing to name names?

McGEEHY: Yes. Well, one of the most sacrosanct things that the Agency observes is the rule that you don't name other Agency personnel or agents.

TRUDEAU: It doesn't make sense, though, that he says he is not a CIA employee, that he just works with the CIA.

McGEEHY: Well, I assume that he probably might have signed a contract with Southern Air Transport or something like that, which is -- in the past was a wholly owned CIA proprietary, according to the Senate committee that investigated the Agency. So, he might consider himself an employee of Southern Air Transport rather than an employee of CIA. But it's sort of a minor distinction in my mind.

TRUDEAU: Why would he even have to know, though, that he's working for the CIA people?

McGEEHY: Well, if you're running guns and doing things like that which are illegal in American law, you know, or trying to overturn a government with which we have relations, it's necessary to know that you have official standing.

TRUDEAU: The American Administration's reaction to all this, of course, has been denial. They've been attributing it to perhaps some of these anti-communist groups operating in the States and elsewhere who are trying to help the Contras, yet this man says his supply flight came from an airport in El Salvador. What does that mean to you?

McGEEHY: Well, it's a tightly controlled military base, so there's absolutely no way that the flights could come out of there without the knowledge of the American government as well as the El Salvadoran government. There's just no way that you can fly into a tightly controlled military base and fly out of it without it being observed.

TRUDEAU: But the denials are still there, Mr. Shultz, the CIA.

McGEEHY: Well, look, take the example of Downy and Secto who were downed over China in the summer operations back in the early '50s, and for 20 years the U.S. Government denied that they were affiliated with the Central Intelligence Agency. Finally, when Nixon wanted to go to China, the -- they admitted to, yes, they had been employees of the CIA.

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They had sort of the same situation with the Gary Powers flight, denying that, you know, the airplane was an American plane or that -- first, it was just a weather plane, and then finally....

TRUDEAU: Then, you had a flat denial that was made a lot quicker than the one of the case of the two men over China?

McGEEHY: Yes, yes. Well, it was so irrefutable that they -- I mean, Eisenhower took the position that he had to admit that he was CIA. There was no way to get around it. Then they had the case of Alexander Pope in Indonesia who was downed bombing -- during the bombing run in Indonesia in 1958, and I think it was some years he came into several million dollars as a private citizen. That's standard. You have a level of cover stories that you go through with, and you have another one, and another one and another one.

What surprises me is how rapidly Mr. Hasenfus has sort of given away the whole story.

TRUDEAU: He's expected to fake it, too, for a while?

McGEEHY: Yes, yes. He should hold out for a while.

TRUDEAU: And what do you think if -- if his story is true and if they're flying these missions out of that tightly guarded military airport in El Salvador, will it stop? He said there were ten missions out of there. Could there be more?

McGEEHY: I -- I suppose during the time Reagan is up in Reykjavik it will stop for a few days, but the hundred thousand dollars, or hundred million dollars is -- has been virtually all but approved, and as soon as that is approved then these sort of flights in essence become legal again. Congress gives its approval. Of course, it's a violation of international law, according to the World Court, but we decided that we don't come under the constraints of international law.

TRUDEAU: What happens in the CIA when this kind of thing happens?

McGEEHY: Well, I'm sure there's great consternation with the revelation of the various airlines that have been linked up in installations and the weaponry and all of this sort of thing. There will be efforts taken to shift things around somewhat so they can't be further identified or linked to the CIA.

TRUDEAU: The question then becomes how to keep from getting caught, not should we be doing this?

McGEEHY: Not to stop what we're doing, but how to keep from

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getting caught or how to keep the American people from knowing what's going on. They don't care about the Nicaraguans, of course. The Nicaraguans can know what's happening, but it's the American people who must be deceived, and the plan will go into effect of how do we further deceive the American people?

TRUDEAU: Mr. McGeehy, thanks very much.

McGEEHY: Thank you, Dennis.

TRUDEAU: Goodbye.

McGEEHY: Bye.

MAITLAND: Ralph McGeehy is the author of Deadly Deceits, My 25 Years with the CIA.